

Mutual Knowledge in a future
State, *13 F.F.H.*

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OFFERED AS AN

A R G U M E N T

O F

C O N S O L A T I O N

U N D E R T H E

L O S S : o f F R I E N D S .

In a S E R M O N ,

P R E A C H E D B Y

W I L L I A M D O D D , L L . D .

Chaplain to Dr. SQUIRE, late Lord Bishop of St. DAVID's,

A N D

Chaplain in Ordinary to his MAJESTY.

The SECOND EDITION, with an APPENDIX.

L O N D O N :

Printed by W. FADEN, near Shoe-Lane, Fleet-Street,

MDCCLXVII.

[Price Six Pence.]



T O

Mrs. S Q U I R E.

M A D A M,

I N great afflictions there is a time, when the attempt to console only aggravates distress; and the language of pity serves but to encrease the soul's anxiety. The lenient hand of time, and the calm persuasions of our divine religion, will alone produce that acquiescence in the disposals of Providence, which is the immediate duty, and the truest consolation of human creatures.

It is on this account that I have so long forborne the tender office I now undertake, of condoling with you on our mutual loss: a loss, great indeed to me; yet very small in comparison of what You have sustained. I have lost a valuable and never enough to be esteemed Friend; but You, Madam, in

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that

that Friend have lost an Husband, and your Children a Father, as excellent, I may truly say, without derogating from any man's merit, as ever yet was called by those affectionate names.

The sincere and pleasing friendship in which you, Madam, and our dear Bishop so happily lived together, must render, I am persuaded, that Argument of Consolation, which I have presumed to offer, peculiarly affecting and satisfactory. It is, it will be the joy of your future life, to look back with a tenderly painful remembrance on what is past, to look forward with a joyful well-grounded hope to the blissful hour, which shall restore you to HIM in Heaven, whom you so faithfully loved upon Earth.

With a constant view to that desirable period, you will continue to exert those offices of love towards the surviving pledges of your affection, which were the delight of you both, while Providence blessed you together: and for which he hath rendered you more amiably capable, in some measure to supply the defect of so worthy a Father's counsel and guidance.

I know it would delight you to see, I am sure it would no less delight me to draw, if I were able, the true and lively picture of His character, whose name and memory must for ever be dear to us. His social virtues, as an Husband, a Father, a Relation, a Friend, a Master, those who best knew Him, will always most admire and praise: Alas! Madam, we think with anxious concern of the exquisite sensibility of his affectionate heart!

His learning and abilities appear from his writings; and we hope you will suffer them to appear still brighter, by indulging the world with some of those learned and elaborate performances which he hath left behind. Have we not reason to apprehend, that his indefatigable application to labours of this kind, was one cause of hastening that loss, which we must ever deplore?

As a Parish-Minister, he was exact and conscientiously diligent in the discharge of his duties; manly and engaging in the Pulpit; and ever ready in private to discharge the meanest offices of his function. In his episcopal station, no man exerted himself

more, during the short period he filled that high office. Zealous to reform all abuses in the extensive Diocese, over which the Providence of God called him to preside, and which he visited constantly ; making it his labour to know its true state, and to consult by all means in his power for the advancement of our holy religion in it : Careful to seek out and to promote, without any solicitation on their part, promising and capable young men ; many of whom, in the little space he enjoyed the Bishoprick, have been advanced by him : Nice in his examinations, cautious in his admission to Orders, and anxious to repel every person of unbecoming character and conduct from the sacred function : Hospitable to a degree beyond most of his predecessors ; tho' some of the noblest nature and most generous disposition have not long since preceded his Lordship in that Diocese : Easy, affable, and polite in his manner ; always studious to give the conversation some learned and useful turn, and treating his Clergy with such engaging condescension, that it was difficult to say, whether they left his presence most filled with respect or affection.

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In short, in public life he was exemplary, in private life amiable; a stedfast friend, a sincere Christian, and a truly loyal subject to a Prince, whose virtues it was always his pleasure to recount; as it was his peculiar honour to have received the earliest marks of his royal favour.

It is with a melancholy satisfaction that I pay this little tribute, and drop this grateful tear over the good Bishop's memory, which I must ever honour. For I could sooner forget myself than the pleasing distinction he gave me; than the friendly intercourse we lately enjoyed so happily together; than the favours which he bestowed upon me, in so fatherly, so obliging a manner: for what his Lordship said of one of his patrons was equally true of himself; "so kind and obliging was his manner in conferring favours, that it added a double pleasure to the receiver."

Happy shall I think myself, if any attention on my part can ever prove acceptable to You, Madam, and your beloved little family. Duty and gratitude will always demand from me the sincerest attachment; and while we continue sometimes to re-

flect together on the great, the, in some measure, irreparable loss we have sustained; let us, at least, thankful for the comforts we have enjoyed, support ourselves with the strong consolation, that a good and merciful Providence is over us, a gracious and almighty Father, who, when judging it right, will remove us from every affliction, and give us to our Friend, to Himself, to endless and uninterrupted felicity.

I am,

MADAM,

With the truest Regard,

Your most Sincere

Southampton Row,
Oct. 18. 1766.

and Affectionate

Humble Servant,

WILLIAM DODD.

P O S T.

P O S T S C R I P T.

IT is proper just to add, that the late SAMUEL SQUIRE, D. D. Lord Bishop of *St. David's*, was the Son of Mr. SQUIRE, of *Warminster*, in *Wiltshire*, where he was born in the year 1714. He was educated at *St. John's College, Cambridge*, of which he became a Fellow : Soon after the Bishop of *Bath and Wells*, Dr. *Wynne*, appointed him his Chaplain, and presented him to the Arch-deaconry of *Bath*. In 1748, he was presented by the King to the Rectory of *Topsfield* in *Essex* : and in 1749, when the Duke of *Newcastle* was installed Chancellor of *Cambridge*, he preached one of the commencement Sermons, and took the degree of Doctor in Divinity. In 1750, he was collated by Archbishop *Herring* to the Rectory of *St. Ann, Westminster*, then vacant by the death of Dr. *Pelling*, being his Grace's option on the See of *London*, and for which he resigned his living of *Topsfield*, in favour of a relation of the Archbishop's, who now holds it. Soon after Dr. SQUIRE was presented

sented by the King to the Vicarage of *Greenwich* in *Kent*; and on the establishment of the household of the Prince of *Wales*, (his present Majesty) he was appointed His Royal Highness's Clerk of the Closet. In 1760, he was appointed to the Deanery of *Bristol*, and in 1761, on the death of Dr. *Ellis*, to the Bishoprick of *St. Davids*, being the first person promoted to a Bishoprick by his present Majesty after his Accession to the Throne. He died on the 7th Day of *May* 1766.

Bishop SQUIRE's published Writings are,

1. *Plutarch's Treatise de Isi et Osiride*, in Greek and English, with large Notes.

N. B. The Bishop had a design in his earlier days to have published several parts of *Plutarch's* works in this manner, some of which he had prepared for the Press.

2. An enquiry into the nature of the English constitution; or an historical Essay on the Anglo-Saxon Government, both in *Germany* and *England*.

An

An useful and excellent Treatise, which his Lordship before his death had carefully revised and improved, with a view to a new Edition.

3. The ancient history of the Hebrews vindicated; or Remarks on the third volume of The moral Philosopher: *Camb.* 1741.

This tract, being published without a name, has not been known according to its merit. However it has been well received and spoken of abroad: A particular account is given in it of the *Hicfos* or Shepherd Kings in *Egypt*.

4. Two Essays, 1. A Defence of the ancient Greek Chronology; 2. An Inquiry into the origin of the Greek Language, *Camb.* 1741.

5. Indifference for Religion inexcusable; or a serious, impartial, and practical Review of the certainty, importance, and harmony of natural and revealed Religion. *Lond.* 1758.

This work was drawn up by the Bishop, when Clerk of the Closet to his present Majesty, to whom it is dedicated. It has been well received; and is principally designed

ed and calculated for the use of the young and inferior Clergy, who are not able to procure larger works in defence of their Religion.

6. The principles of Religion made easy to young persons, in a short and familiar Catechism.

By the approbation of the Princess of *Wales*, drawn up for the use of, and by the Bishop dedicated to, the late Prince *Frederick William*.

Besides these the Bishop published several single Sermons; amongst which we must particularly mention that before the Governors of the Small-pox Hospital.

Some Posthumous works, to which he had put his last hand, are left behind, which, it is hoped, will be published in due time.

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2 Samuel xii. 23.

NOW HE IS DEAD, WHEREFORE SHOULD
I FAST? CAN I BRING HIM BACK
AGAIN? I SHALL GO TO HIM: BUT
HE SHALL NOT RETURN TO ME.

NO Contemplation can be so in-
teresting, and, if properly pur-
sued, so beneficial, as that of
DEATH: For in this all men are alike
concerned: It is the only thing where-
of all men are absolutely certain; and its
consequences are in the highest degree
im-

important, as they respect a state, which is not only eternal, but unalterable.

It is wise therefore to contemplate death, and to apply every argument which may diminish his terror. I would offer one such argument to reconcile us more and more to the stroke of this conqueror, who must one day triumph over our mortal part. And surely every additional argument to so desirable an end must be satisfactory to our souls; and administer consolation to us amidst the unavoidable evils of this uncertain world; where death is every day exerting his power, and giving us fresh and striking instances of the slight tenure by which we hold our present existence.

The argument, I would offer, is That which afforded the royal DAVID comfort, and which he has so finely expressed in the words of the text: *Now he is dead, wherefore should I fast? Can I bring him back again? I shall go to him: but he shall not return to me.*

Here then is the grand balm for the afflicted mind; Here is one of the most pleasing supports against the fear (always considered as subordinate to that first and greatest

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est source of comfort, Faith in Jesus Christ), Here is one of the most engaging incitements to a glad reception, of the messenger of death: "The certainty, the glorious and transporting certainty, that we shall meet again, and enjoy those beloved friends, who have got the start of us in the course of life, and are first happily admitted to our Father's house."

In this view, Dying is To live: For what is life, but the enjoyment of those she love? And who would wish to drag out a miserable existence here below, secluded from all the pleasures and endearments of friendly society; denied all that intercourse of hearts, which gives to life its true relish; and condemned to a selfish, solitary, low state of being, neither loving, nor being loved?

Such an existence, truly speaking, is death. And if, by the providence of God, we are reduced so far to such a kind of existence, as not to have lost the heart, but to have lost those, who dwelt, as it were, in that heart's affection; certainly the dismission from hence, which restores us to those objects of our affection, can never with propriety be deemed an evil: It must

must always be considered as the most desirable good.

We all sensibly feel the pleasure of meeting a friend truly valued and esteemed, after long absence, though that friend, as well as ourselves, still retains those many imperfections to which human nature is subject. Let us but consider our departed friends in this view; as absent from us for a season; and while we keep up in our minds a tender remembrance of them, we may easily conceive the exalted satisfaction we shall enjoy, when the voyage of our life is over, and we are met upon the celestial shore by those, who in life have been dear to us, as our own souls; whom we shall now see, and by whom we ourselves too shall be seen, not clothed with the robes of mortality and imperfection, but adorned with the perfect glories of immortality, incorruption and truth!

Oh how transporting *then*, to mingle, converse, interests, amities! To recollect the past endearments and mutual good offices in this dangerous world, thro' which we have so happily steer'd! To pour out our mutual thanksgivings to the great Author

thor of our bliss ! mutually to contemplate and admire all his mighty works of mercy and of love ! and to pass an eternity in consummate reciprocations of affection ; which sin shall never discredit, sorrow shall never damp, and which the fear and pain of parting never more shall interrupt ! Strange indeed must be the hearts, which are insensible to expectations high and exquisite as these : And these are the expectations,—nay, I ought to say more,—These are the great, the interesting *realities*, which every true believer hath before his eyes : And in this light, who can fear death, or imagine it an evil ?

Indeed, to the true Christian, there is no such thing as death. The blessed Redeemer hath so far removed that curse and consequence of the fall, as to assure us, that *he who believeth in Him, shall never die* †. Tho' therefore our mortal part must necessarily submit to corruption and the grave, yet the soul never knows dissolution ; but immediately, on departing from the body, *passes from death unto life*, and enters into that world, where is every object of its desire ; where it is admitted to the God whom it

† John 11. 26.

has loved and longed for upon earth, and to the society of those whom it hath held most dear. The worldling, on the contrary, who leaves behind him all he holds dear, and enters into a world, where he hath neither hope nor treasure, may be truly said to *die*. But the death of the *Christian* to this world, is only a restoration to life, or, properly, a beginning to live: And in this view again, can we esteem death any other than the most substantial good?

Few of us continue so short a time in this world, as to have no friends precede us in the journey of life. If we are cut off young ourselves, it seldom happens, but we have seen some of our companions go before us. But if we grow up to man's estate, and continue for some time in life, we have generally many trials of this sort. We are frequently called to the mournful office of attending a dying friend, of closing the eyes of a valued relation, and affectionate companion; and it frequently happens to those, whose lives are extended to a considerable span, that almost all whom they love and hold dear, quit the state before them, and leave them, poor solitaries, in a dark and deserted world! But how refreshing

refreshing the thought, that the period cannot be far distant, which shall restore all those separated from us, to our sight and embraces! How refreshing the thought, that we are going to a place, where we have already so many friends, expectant of our approach, and earnestly desirous to receive us!—Tell us not that this is death: It is returning home: It is a restoration to our country, our house, and all we love best, after a fatiguing and dangerous voyage, over an ocean vexed with tempests, and abounding with rocks and shoals.

And think you the Mariner, who for many months hath been toss'd on such an ocean, whose well-nigh foundering vessel can scarce longer endure the conflicting shock of winds and waves; think you, that he enters the harbour which gives him to his country, to his home, to his wife, to his children, to his friends;—Think you that he enters that harbour with terror and dismay? Oh Christian—Thou art this Mariner! Learn then to enter the blissful port of death, nay, rather, I will say, of *life*, with affections like his, who considers himself returning to friends most endeared, to possessions most valued.

It is generally the bitterest part of death,—it is always the bitterest part to good minds,—to leave behind those whom they love. But how consolatory a thought arises from hence, That all those left behind must sooner or later come to that place where we are arrived! That tho' we can no more *return* to our friends, they must assuredly *come* to us; and give us the inexpressible happiness of participating our joys; joys which can never cause envy; for they will be more than sufficient to gratify the amplest desires of all: They will be like a sun, ever shining, never withdrawing itself; for they will proceed from that glorious Sun of Righteousness, the unexhausted fountain of all good, the unchangeable light and glory of the New Jerusalem.

It is no uncommon thing in the world, to hear commended, and to find chosen for habitations, places to which numbers resort, because at one period or another, there is an high probability of seeing there our different friends and acquaintance: This is thought a recommendation, (and doubtless a most desirable one it is,) of such places: It is founded on that amiable principle in the human heart, which unites
and

and endears us to each other. How eligible then, in this view, must be that future world, that Kingdom of universal reception, to which every pilgrim below is unerringly directed, and at which every pilgrim must undoubtedly arrive!† Not a friend left behind, but we shall one day welcome thither: Not a friend left behind, but shall one day glad our expecting eyes, and add by his arrival augmentation to our bliss!

It was this reflection which filled the heart of the aged CATO with so much comfort, and caused him to cry out in that ever-memorable and most pleasing manner, upon the view of his departure from this short and uncertain life: “O glorious day! when I shall quit this impure and corrupted multitude, to join myself to that di-

* The *candid* reader need not be told,---the whole tenor of this Discourse plainly proves it,---that the Writer here considers only the case of *all* those *virtuous* friends we leave behind: That he does not here consider the future world in any other view than as the place of reception of such *virtuous* persons: And the objection which he hath endeavoured to obviate in the 14th page, demonstrates beyond all doubt, that he can never look upon that place of reception as destined for persons of all characters: “*Nothing unholy or defiling shall ever enter there.*”

vine and happy company of great souls, who have quitted the earth before me! There I shall find not only those illustrious personages, but also my CATO, who, I can say, was one of the best of men, of the best nature, and the most faithful to his duty. I have laid his body upon that funeral pile whereon he ought to have placed mine. But his soul has never left me; and without losing sight of me, he is only gone before into a country, where he knew I should soon rejoin him*." If this hope made so great an impression upon the soul of a Pagan, what ought it not to do upon that of a Christian?

Such is the consolation which every true Christian may derive from this fine sentiment of *David's*, *Wherefore should I fast? Can I cause him to return? I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me.*

* See *Cicero de Senectute*. "Who would not, says *Socrates*, (in his *Apology*,) part with a great deal, to purchase a meeting with *Orpheus*, *Homer*, *Hesiod*, &c.? If it be true, that this is to be the consequence of death, I would even be glad to die often. What pleasure will it give me to live with *Palamedes*, and others, who suffered unjustly, and to compare my fate with theirs! What an inconceivable happiness will it be to converse in another world with *Sisyphus*, *Ulysses*, &c. especially as those who inhabit that world shall die no more!"

It is but justice to the argument however, briefly to obviate an objection, which appears to stagger some, and which, if it were true, would invalidate all we have spoken. Some have thought that mutual knowledge will not take place in the future world: An idea, which they seem to have imbibed principally from the difficulty of accounting for the state of our minds in a kingdom of bliss, upon the prospect of the misery of a friend whom we held dear in life. "Would not this, say they, cloud the felicity of paradise, and make a breach in that perfect happiness which we are taught to expect."

Now, in answer to this, let it first be observed, that in our present and confined state of knowledge, the best way to obtain the most complete intelligence whereof we are capable, as well in natural as in spiritual matters, is to ascertain ourselves, with all the evidence and satisfaction we can, of the truth of a matter; and arriving at this, we shall act wisely, not to be shaken by every objection which may occur; since it is undeniable, that there is nothing, either in nature or in grace, which we can fully and adequately comprehend.

If the fact be so in the *natural world*,—as it is unquestionably,—where the objects are before us, and subject to the closest examination of our senses; how much rather must it be so in points relative to that *spiritual world*, whereof we neither have, nor can have any direct and adequate conceptions? Revelation in these cases is our only certain guide; and from Revelation (to refer, *secondly*, this general reasoning to the particular point in question) we have undoubted proof of *mutual knowledge in a future state*. The text alone is a sufficient proof: For, understood in any other manner, it conveys no distinct ideas; certainly it conveys no *consolatory* ideas: Whereas, it is plain, that *David* used it as the strongest possible argument of comfort to his soul. “Though it is impossible for me to restore life, and to bring back my child from that future world into which he is entered; yet will I cease to grieve and lament,—in the sure, the consolatory hope, That I shall go to him, and receive him again to my embraces in that future world.” We find in the New Testament various proofs of this knowledge; it constantly represents the future state, as a
state

state of mutual knowledge; for it tells us that we shall *converse with*, that we shall *sit down with*, and in consequence shall *know*, *Abraham*, *Isaac*, and *Jacob*, and the rest of the patriarchs and apostles *. Now, if we shall know these, is it not more than probable that we shall also know those with whom we have been united in the dearest bonds of friendship and concord upon earth? Again; *Abraham* is represented as known to, and well knowing *Dives* and *Lazarus*. *To day*, said our Saviour to the penitent thief, *shalt thou be with me in paradise*; plainly intimating *mutual and personal knowledge*: Indeed, the whole enjoyment of heaven is founded upon such knowledge: For, it is the conscious individual who is to share that enjoyment: It is his consciousness which not only constitutes his personality, but his enjoyment: And was a man deprived of this consciousness, to which mutual knowledge is inseparably joined, he would, if I may so express myself, cease to be himself; he would become another person. So that if we retain personal identity in a future state,

* See the Visitor, Numb. 45. Vol. II:

which

which I presume no man will deny, we must retain mutual knowledge; for we must retain that consciousness, upon which this personal identity and knowledge depend.

“But what then will be the state of our minds with respect to those friends whom we must know to be in misery, by not finding them in bliss?” In the first place, with regard to this matter, leave it wholly to God: be assured, He will fulfil all he hath promised; and never admit a doubt but that he will make, as he hath promised, our future happiness complete. But in the next place let us observe, That tho’ a perfect acquiescence in God’s goodness is sufficient to satisfy every humble mind; yet we may rationally conclude, that the state of our souls will be such in that future world, as not only entirely to approve, but to admire all the decisions and determinations of our God. The love of him will undoubtedly be the ruling principle; one which will absorb all others, and consequently, suffer us only to delight in that wherein He delights, and to love that only which He loves.

The relations and connections of this world will then also be entirely dissolved,

or

or at least enlarged to the whole universe of beatified souls: and consequent upon these sentiments and relations, I humbly apprehend, our souls will lose all attachment to those who have lost their attachment to God; and, though receiving augmentations of bliss from the accession of every virtuous friend to that bliss, will feel neither pain nor concern for *their* absence, who have rendered themselves unworthy, and miserable *.

See

* Since the writing of this sermon, happening to read one of the celebrated Mr. *Saurin's* discourses, I met with the following passage, which, coinciding entirely with my own sentiments, is here presented to the reader in an *English* dress:

There is a celebrated question in the schools. "Whether we shall remember in heaven the connections which we have had upon earth? Whether the saints will know each other again? Whether the father will know again his son, whether the child his parent? and so on:" I dare say that both those who have taken the affirmative, and those who have taken the negative side of the question, have sometimes done it upon equally slight foundation.

On the one hand, the former have pretended to establish their thesis upon this opinion, that something would be wanting to our felicity, if in the oeconomy of eternity we did not find again those persons with whom we were united by the most tender ties in the oeconomy of time.

On

See then, from the whole of this argument, what *motives* arise for virtuous *friendship*,

On the other hand, " If we then knew each other, how—(have the partizans for the latter opinion argued)—how would it be possible for a father to be happy in the possession of a felicity which he shared not with his children? or to be sensible of the pleasures he should enjoy at the right hand of God, while this fatal idea rankled in his soul,—My children are for ever with the devil!"

Methinks the proof and the objection are equally ill-founded. The possession of God is so capable of overflowing a soul, that it could not dare to consider as a thing necessary to its felicity, the renewal of those ties, which it had just felt, during that small point of time it passed upon earth. This is my objection to the proof.

The same I urge against the objection: The possession of God is so capable of overflowing a soul, that it can love nothing but *in God*; and that its felicity cannot be allayed by the miseries of those with whom they will then be wholly unconnected.

A consideration of another kind has always inclined me to their opinion who take the affirmative of the question proposed. The attributes of God are covered here below with innumerable veils. How often does he seem to love iniquity, by the favours he confers upon the authors of the most impious devices? How often does he seem to declare himself against innocence, by the miseries which he suffers to break loose upon the innocent? How often have we seen tyrants upon a throne, and good men in a prison? Does not this dejecting
phœ-

ship, and true christian love! For it is to these alone that this argument appertains, and the consolation it brings *.

phenomenon precisely furnish us with one of the most powerful arguments for the doctrine of an universal judgment, and another life? Which of our preachers has not told you, *Judge nothing before the time?* After the time will come *that day of re-establishment of all things*, which shall justify providence.

Now, methinks this argument (which is contested only by *Libertines* and *Infidels*, and which is generally received by all *Christians* and *Philosophers*) favours, not to say incontestably establishes, their opinion, who believe that the Saints *will know each other* in another life. Without this, how could we acquiesce in the justice of the sentence passed upon them? Behold St. Paul! whose ministry was continually thwarted: What motive can support him amidst his trials?—The expectation of one day seeing with his eyes the conquests he hath gained for JESUS CHRIST; those souls which he hath wrested from the devil; those believers whom he hath conducted to the highest felicity. *What is our hope?* says he to the *Thessalonians*, *What is our joy, and our crown of glory?*—*Are not even ye, in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming? Yea, doubtless; ye are our glory and our joy.*

Masters of families, it is this hope, it is this crown, which I set before you, to engage you to devote your children to God by an holy education, &c. See *Les Sermons de Saurin*, tom. xii. p. 24.

* See the Note, p. 10.

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It is not to every union in society ; It is not to every temporal bond of good fellowship ; It is not to every connection, contracted for private, selfish, and worldly views, that this high expectation belongs, or its exquisite comforts can be applied.

Would You receive its balm to your hearts, you must not only be careful to live in the discharge of those duties, which through Christ, are the best preparatives for a happy death ; but must endeavour to unite with you in the discharge of these duties, those whom you love now, and desire to love eternally.

Mark then, how FRIENDSHIP coincides with every other principle, to recommend the faith of Christ, and the love of God ! without which, as of every other blessing, so shall we be deprived of that which is the cordial of the heart ; deprived of the blessed, the chearful, the enrapturing certainty of meeting again, meeting never more to part, those who were very dear to us in life, and whose separation from us we thought, and justly thought perhaps, our greatest affliction and evil.

“ But

“ But can we bring them back again ? ”

Alas ! that is not in our power : and surely, if it were, it would be as little in our choice.

No ! dear departed friends ! however we valued you here ; however sensibly we feel your loss ; we wish not to see you struggling again beneath the burthen and the difficulties of mortality ! We hail your safe arrival on that blessed shore, *where the wicked cease to trouble, and the weary are at rest !* Where the faithful meet their full reward, and the God of goodness is their hope for ever !

Anxiously expectant of the day which shall set us also free from the prison of the flesh, and give us once more to your affectionate endearments ; we will be mindful of the great truths which that glorious expectation strongly enforces : We will tread in the steps of your virtuous example, and endeavour, thro' the all-sufficient grace of Jesus, so to improve our souls, that they may be worthy of your acknowledgment, and meet to participate of your inheritance in light ! Happy in this preparation ; happy in such just and comfortable sentiments, we will not grieve, we will rejoice rather, when the
mes-

messenger of death approaches! Full of christian
 fortitude, of faith and love, " Wel-
 come, will we say, happy consummation
 of our hopes ! welcome, thou pleasing
 messenger of joy ! oh, bear us instant
 and without delay to the fight and em-
 braces of those for whom we have so
 long and so ardently sighed ! Bear us to
 our Parents, to our Brethren, our Sisters,
 our Friends ! who stand ready to receive
 and welcome us, and to introduce us to
 that God, and that blessedness, which is
 as superior to our highest conceptions, as
 it is to the most exalted merits of Saints
 and of Angels !"

APPEN-

Since the Publication of this Sermon, a Dissertation on the Subject has appeared in a Volume, intitled *Four Dissertations, &c.* by *Richard Price*, F. R. S. from whence, in confirmation of what is advanced in the Sermon, we have made the following Extract. See Differt. 328.

A P P E N D I X:

“THERE is great reason to believe, that virtuous men, as beings of the same species, who have begun existence in the same circumstances, and been trained up to virtue in the same trial and discipline, will be hereafter placed in the same common mansions of felicity. It is groundless and unnatural to imagine, that, after passing through this life, they will be removed to different worlds, or scattered into different regions of the universe: The language of the Scriptures seems plainly and expressly to determine the contrary. They acquaint us, that mankind are to be raised from the dead *together*, and to be judged together; and that the righteous, after the general resurrection and judgment, are to be taken together to the same heavenly state, there to live and reign with *Christ*, and to share in his dignity and happiness. When, in the Epistle to the *Hebrews*, (Chap. xii. 22.—24.) we are said, in consequence of the clear discoveries made by the gospel

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of a future state, to be, as it were, already come to the city of the living God, to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the first-born, and to the spirits of just men made perfect; it is plainly implied, that we are to join the general assembly of just men and of angels in the realms of light, and to be fixed in the same mansions with them.

The state of future reward is frequently, in the New Testament, described under the notion of a city, that is, a community or society. It is likewise very often called a kingdom; — the kingdom of God, and the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. The great end of Christ's coming into the world was to lay the foundation of this kingdom, by saving men from the effects of guilt, delivering them from death, and uniting the virtuous part of them under one perfect and everlasting government in the heavens. It is said of the true disciples of Christ, that *because he lives, they shall live also*; that they shall hereafter *appear with him in glory*; that he is now *entered for them into heaven, as their forerunner*; that he is there *preparing a place for them*; and that he will soon *come again to take them to himself, that where he is there they may be also, beholding his glory*. This account is utterly inconsistent with the supposition, that those
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who shall partake of the future reward of virtue, are to be dispersed into different parts of the universe, and scarcely leaves us any room to doubt on the present question. For, is it possible, that we should be happy hereafter in the same seats of joy, under the same perfect government, and as members of the same heavenly society, and yet remain strangers to one another? Shall we be together with *Christ*, and yet not with each other? or, Shall we lose one another in that *multitude which cannot be numbered* (*Rev. vii. 9.*), of those who have been rescued by him from destruction, and who will follow him to his everlasting kingdom? Being in the same happy state with our present virtuous friends and relatives, will they not be accessible to us? and if accessible, shall we not fly to them, and mingle hearts and souls again? I am very sensible, that a great deal of what the Scriptures say of the future state is accommodated to our present imperfect ideas, and must not be understood too literally: but if, in the present instance, it means any thing, it must mean as much as implies what I am pleading for.

In order to give some further evidence on this point, it will not be amiss to desire that the following passages of scripture may be attended to. The *Thessalonians*, a little before *St. Paul* wrote his first epistle to

to them, had, it seems, lost some of their friends by death. In these circumstances he exhorts them not to *sorrow like others who had no hope*, because they might conclude certainly, from the death and resurrection of *Jesus*, that those who *had slept in him*, God would hereafter bring with him. He tells them *by the word of the Lord*, or as from immediate revelation, that a period was coming, when *Christ* should descend from heaven *with a shout, with the voice of the Archangel, and with the trump of God*; and when the friends they had lost should be raised from the dead, and, together with themselves, *should be caught up to meet the Lord in the air, and to live forever with him.* chap. iv. 13, 14, &c. But what I have in view is more distinctly asserted in chap. ii. 19. *For what is our hope, our joy, our crown of rejoicing? are not even ye, in the presence of our Lord Jesus, at his coming?* It is most plainly implied in these words, that the apostle expected to see and know again his *Thessalonian* converts, at *Christ's* second coming. The same remark may be made on his words, in 2 Cor. iv. 14. *knowing that he which raised up the Lord Jesus, shall raise us up also by Jesus, and present us with you.* And also in 2 Cor. i. 14. *As you have acknowledged us in part, that we are your rejoicing, even so ye also are ours, in the day of the Lord Jesus.*"

